

1982 Youth Night features Leavell



Clawson Leavell

Landrum Leavell, II, is president of New Orleans Seminary. He is a graduate of Mercer University, Macon, Ga., and earned the bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from New Orleans Seminary. Mississippi College awarded him an honorary degree in 1981. Leavell was pastor of First Baptist Church, Wichita Falls, Tex., from 1963 to 1975 when he became seminary president. Earlier he was pastor of four Mississippi Baptist churches: Union Church, near Magnolia; Crosby Church; First Church, Charleston; and First Church, Gulfport. Cynthia Clawson was voted gospel music's top vocalist in the 1981 Dove Awards Ceremony for the second consecutive year. And her album "You're Welcome Here," also won as top album.

Yazoo City layman

(Continued from page 1)
executive secretary-treasurer of Arkansas Baptists until his death last year. Programs throughout the meeting emphasized the need for heightened Southern Baptist commitment to achieve the convention's Bold Mission Thrust objective of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people of the world by the year 2000. President H. Keith Parks stressed importance of the Cooperative Program to the whole framework of Southern Baptist witness as he showed board members the new film "More Than Money," which tells how money given by individual churches through the program enables missionaries to witness in 95 countries. Last year the board received \$39,168,468 through the Cooperative Program. Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the Woman's Missionary Un-

ion, which promotes the Lottie Moon offering and week of prayer for foreign missions, said receipts thus far from the 1981 offering bring the total amount which Southern Baptists have given since the offering began in 1888 to more than half a billion dollars. Comparing missions to Birmingham's steel industry, she said that just as four elements are essential to the making of steel, four elements also are essential to missions—people, prayer, money and the Holy Spirit. All these, she said, are "in abundance in the Southern Baptist Convention." Yet in 1982, she said, "We can only cry when we look at the needs of the world." These semi-annual out of state meetings of the Foreign Mission Board will be held next year in Indianapolis; 1984 in Gulfport, Miss.; 1985 in Nashville, Tenn.; 1986 in Denver; and 1987 in North Carolina in a city yet to be named.



Hall, Snow win trophies

Above, Mera Hall of Clinton is shown with Dot Pray, keyboard specialist for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Church Music Department. Mera won the judge's trophy in piano at the recent state keyboard festival. At right is Mark Snow of Richland who won the judge's trophy for organ. The festival was held at William Carey College following 12 district festivals. Honorable mention awards went to Tammy Griffin and Tammy Harrison, both of Meridian; Ken Watford of Boyle; and Robin Wilson of Columbus.



Youth Missions Conference

Ron Ballard, missionary to Paraguay, discusses his work in South America with a 'family group' during the Youth Missions Conference. This first such conference, held at Gulfshore, was aimed primarily at allowing teenagers to get to know better missionaries of the Home and Foreign Mission Boards. 20 missionaries were in attendance among the 550 registered participants at the conference.

Royal Ambassador 1982 summer camp schedule set June-August

The 1982 Royal Ambassador Camp schedule will take place at Central Hills Baptist Retreat, Kosciusko. Resident camps are for boys in grades 4-12 and will cost \$45 per person. They will be June 7-11, June 14-18, June 21-25, June 28-July 2; July 5-9, July 12-16, July 19-23, July 26-30, Aug. 2-6, and Aug. 9-13. Dad-Lad weekend camps are for boys in grades 1-3 and their fathers. They will cost \$12.50 per person. These camps will take place June 25-26, July 9-10, and July 23-24.

Video goes offshore

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP) — Videotapes of Bible studies and worship services will provide an additional ministry to Louisiana offshore drilling workers. Jimmy Brossette, associate in the Louisiana Baptist Convention's missions division, said two sets of 14 videotapes have been prepared for distribution to oil drilling rigs in the Gulf of Mexico. "Men on the rigs have been asking for such materials," Brossette said.

Youth Vocal Fest to be on July 19

A special one-day Mississippi Baptist Youth Vocal Festival will take place July 19 at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Pass Christian. This will be during the 1982 Youth Music Conference. Those attending the Youth Music Conference may participate in this special festival, but reservations must be made separately. The festival will happen at the Gulfshore auditorium, beginning at 12:45 in the afternoon, concluding at 7 that evening. Gulfshore will not be able to confirm overnight reservations for July 19. Participants can check with Gulfshore after Youth Music Conference check-in to discover the availability of rooms. The festival is open to solo participants only who are in the 10-12th grades during the 1981-82 school year. Each will provide his or her own accompanist. If this is a problem, contact the Church Music department for assistance. The two participants with the highest rating, following judging, will perform the sacred classical selection during the Youth Music Conference worship service that evening. A pre-registration form for each soloist should be sent to the Church Music department no later than July 1. A registration fee of \$10 must accompany each form. Write Church Music department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss., 39205.

Neshoba men build bridges

On April 1, a team of eight men from the Neshoba Associational Brotherhood built two bridges for the Royal Ambassador camp at Central Hills Baptist Retreat near Kosciusko. Material for a tractor bridge was provided by the men, as well as the construction. The group also constructed an arch type walk bridge. The material for the walk bridge was donated for the camp by a person other than the Neshoba group.

Murphy, not Nichols

Bobbie Jean Murphy of the SBC Home Mission Board's department of black church relations was one of the speakers who delivered the Lang Lectures at Mississippi Baptist Seminary centers in Jacksonburg, Jackson, and Prentiss—not Bobbie Jean Nichols as reported in last week's Baptist Record on pages 1 and 2.

Workshop will center on pornography legislation

A "Workshop on Pornography Legislation" will be held May 5 from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Broadmoor Baptist Church, 787 E. Northside Drive, Jackson. This workshop is the first meeting in an attempt to build interest in and concern for the submission and passage of a constitutional bill regarding pornography in Mississippi. The special consultants, speakers, and workshop leaders are: Bruce Taylor, General Counsel for Citizens for Decency through Law, Inc.; and former special prosecutor for Cleveland, Ohio, who handled over 600 obscenity cases in several states; Fred Merrill, Attorney for Citizens for Decency through Law, Inc.; and former counsel for the Arizona House

of Representatives; Paul McCommon, Assistant Solicitor for the State Court of Fulton County, Georgia (Atlanta); and Paul Jones, II, Executive Director, Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention. There is no charge for the workshop and it will end by 3 p.m. to allow time for participants to return home for Wednesday evening responsibilities. The planning committee is chaired by Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention. More information can be secured from the Christian Action Commission, Box 530, Jackson, Miss., 39205. (601) 968-3800.

Indian church dedicates building

The First Indian Baptist Church of Pascagoula, 2821 Ingalls Avenue, conducted a service of dedication for its new building Sunday, April 4. Guests included those who have donated labor, supplies and funds toward the construction of the building. Earl Kelly, executive secretary, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, brought the dedicatory message. Billy Williams, pastor, First Baptist Church, Gautier, presided. Ray Brooks, pastor of First Indian Baptist Church, led in the dedicatory litany. John McBride, director of ministries, Jackson County Baptist Association, offered the dedicatory prayer. Allen Webb, director of missions, Jackson Association, recognized the special guests. Frank Odom of Pascagoula was honored for having served as construction superintendent. The building, of block and stucco construction on a concrete slab, measures 40 x 90 feet. The lot was purchased by the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the building was funded primarily by the Southern Baptist churches of Jackson County. The sponsoring church is the First Baptist, Gautier. Bible study and worship are conducted each Sunday morning and evening and prayer meeting every Wednesday evening at the new building. Ray Brooks, pastor, said that all persons of native American descent are invited to attend. For more information he may be reached at 769-9260.

YWCA workshops deal with youth sexuality education

The Mississippi District YWCA is sponsoring a series of workshops for youth workers, including those who work in churches, in youth sexuality education. Upcoming sites and dates are Robinson-Carpenter Public Library, Cleveland, April 26, 27; Renewal Center, Jackson, April 30, May 1; and Camp Lake Stephens, Oxford, May 7, 8. For more information, contact the Mississippi District YWCA, phone 355-6441 in Jackson.

Taipei, Taiwan—Nearly 100 Chinese Baptist pastors and lay leaders joined 18 missionaries for a March seminar on planting new churches.



Crusader day

This tug-of-war was part of the activities during Crusader Day at Central Hills Baptist Retreat, Kosciusko. The event attracted a total of 767, the largest group at one activity the retreat has had. This was the first year for the Brotherhood Department to sponsor such an activity. Awards were given for the largest group of the furthest distance traveled. Leesburg Church and First Church, Yazoo City, each brought 27. And First church, Pascagoula, traveled furthest at 270 miles.

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Pass Christian, MS
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You Tell Us!

We are making a study of the Cooperative Program, and we need your help. Please answer a few questions, and give us your suggestions. Mail it today to the address below:

Part One Have we been telling you enough?

1. Is "Cooperative Program" a good name for the Baptist mission support plan? [] Yes [] No

2. Do Southern Baptists know what the Cooperative Program is? [] Yes [] No

3. Is the Cooperative Program consistent with Scriptural principles? [] Yes [] No

4. Are you reasonably happy with what it supports and the percentages for each? [] Yes [] No

5. Are we spread too thin and trying to support too many things? [] Yes [] No

Part Two What would you change?

1. Is another name better than "Cooperative Program"? [] Yes [] No What name?

2. Should a bigger percentage of Cooperative Program dollars go for Foreign Missions? [] Yes [] No

3. Half our nation is unchurched; should Home Missions get a higher percentage? [] Yes [] No

4. Can we keep all our Boards, Seminaries, and Commissions? [] Yes [] No

5. What else would you include for support?

Part Three Have we given the Cooperative Program a chance?

1. Do Special Offerings help or hurt the Cooperative Program? [] Help [] Hurt

2. If all Special Offerings were dropped, would you give the same amount of money through the Cooperative Program that you now give in regular and special offerings? [] Yes [] No

3. Would your church give special emphasis to missions and other work if you did not have a special offering? [] Yes [] No

4. Are you satisfied with the percentage of budget your church gives to the Cooperative Program? [] Yes [] No

5. Around 60 to 70 percent of Cooperative Program gifts support ministries and institutions in the states, the remainder going to the Southern Baptist Convention. Is this a good and fair division? [] Yes [] No

Part Four Are we helping?

1. Would you like to see more "Ministry and Mission" publicity showing people being helped by the Cooperative Program? [] Yes [] No

2. Should Cooperative Program "Day" be extended, perhaps to a week or month? [] Yes [] No

3. Is reporting adequate on how Cooperative Program funds are used? [] Yes [] No

4. What is the Cooperative Program's greatest strength?

5. What is its greatest weakness?

Comments: (continue in letter if necessary)

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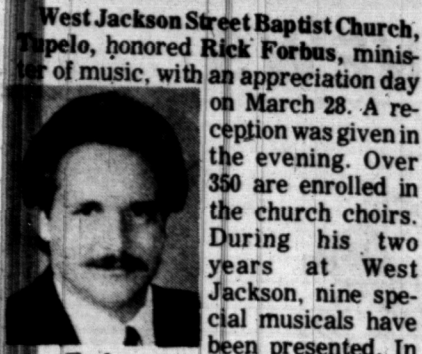
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Names In The News...



Forbus

West Jackson Street Baptist Church, Tupelo, honored Rick Forbus, minister of music, with an appreciation day on March 28. A reception was given in the evening. Over 350 are enrolled in the church choir. During his two years at West Jackson, nine special musicals have been presented. In addition, he has organized a church orchestra, a quartet, and two ensembles, and conducted music workshops and Master and Advanced Master Music classes. The televised presentation on NBC of the West Jackson 1981 Christmas Cantata was a result of his planning. A native of Greenville, Forbus is a graduate of Delta State University and New Orleans Seminary. He is married to the former Nancy Burkett from Columbia. They have two sons.

Music events set for July at Gulfshore

Two special music-related conferences are set for Gulfshore this summer. One follows the other. The first is Youth Choral and Instrumental Conference, July 12-16. The second is Youth Music Conference, July 16-20.

The Choral and Instrumental conference is only being held for the second time. It will provide instruction for youths in instrumental music by organizing two bands, handbell ringing, mass choral singing, and spiritual enrichment. It will also include classes in music drama, songleading, voice, and music theory.

The Youth Music Conference will concentrate on choral work. Classes to be offered include basic musicianship, composition and arranging, "God's will for your life," and voice.

Don Collins, of the University of Central Arkansas and Cambria Press will be choral clinician for both conferences.

For the Choral and Instrumental conference, the band clinician will be Greg Berry of Wayland Baptist University. Handbell clinician will be Perry Robinson, minister of music at First Church, Ellisville. And camp pastor will be Terry Booth, pastor of scenic Heights Baptist Church, Pensacola, Fla. Worship leader for the Youth Music Conference will be Mrs. Annette Hitt, of Clinton.

For more program information on either conference, contact the Church Music Department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss., 39205, phone 968-3800. For registration information, contact Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Henderson Point, Pass Christian, Miss., 39567, phone 452-7261.

Calvary, Tupelo plans marriage enrichment meet

Paige and Foy Cothren will lead a marriage and family enrichment seminar April 29-30 and May 1 at Calvary Baptist Church, Tupelo.

Meetings for April 29 and 30 are scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m. and on May 1 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. A covered dish dinner will be served on Saturday, May 1, at 5:30 p.m., just prior to the seminar. No advance registration is necessary.



McLeod

Swartz

Senior adults will hear McLeod, Swartz

Peter McLeod and Wilbur Swartz are two out-of-state personalities appearing on Senior Adult programs at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly this summer.

McLeod, who is pastor of First Church, Chattanooga, Tenn., will be the doctrinal study leader in general sessions of Retreat II, May 24-28. Retreat I is scheduled May 17-21 when Billy E. Simmons of the New Orleans Seminary faculty will be fulfilling the same role.

Swartz will serve as Bible study leader in both Senior Adult Conclaves, August 16-18 and August 19-21.

Swartz is now retired after a varied career which has included church positions in music, education, youth, and pastor. He has taught religious drama and for 28 years served as professor of preaching at New Orleans Seminary.

Disappointments are to the soul what a thunder-storm is to the air.—Schiller

A foot is a device for finding furniture in the dark.

ROME, Ga. (BP)—George L. Balentine, pastor of First Baptist Church in Augusta, Ga., has been elected president of Shorter College in Rome, Ga. Balentine will succeed Randall H. Minor, who is retiring June 30 after 24 years as president of the Georgia Baptist School.

Antioch Church, Lawrence County, recently ordained two deacons, Jimmie Wayne Beeson and Grady Eugene Boyd. John D. Hedgepeth is pastor.

Vernell Daniels, pastor of Dry Creek Church, Winston County, is also a contractor; he has volunteered himself and his crew to work on Winston Association's Baptist Center.

Students from private, Baptist-supported institutions have captured three of the top five scholarship awards given by Omicron Delta Kappa, national leadership honor society with chapters located on over 180 campuses. The five, selected from 57 applicants, each received \$500 scholarships. The three from Baptist-supported institutions were Billy Mack Pickering of Mississippi College, Nathan Stan Poole of Louisiana College, and Charles Reece Woods of Samford University. Pickering and Woods are preparing for careers in medicine, while Poole is seeking a graduate degree in English.

James S. Netherton, a native of Jackson, Miss., was recently named to the newly created position of vice president for executive affairs at Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

He was elected to the post by Baylor trustees during their March meeting. He had served as executive assistant to Baylor President Herbert H. Reynolds since July, 1981. He received a bachelor of science degree in mathematics with honors from the University of Mississippi and a doctor of philosophy degree in mathematics and computer sciences from the University of Virginia.

Netherton

Parkhill Baptist Church, Jackson, licensed Edward Sumrall to the gospel ministry, Mar. 10. Sumrall is attending Hinds Junior College, and serving as children's director of Parkhill Church. James C. Edwards is pastor.

Nathan Barber and Buddy Dodson of First Church, Bay St. Louis, recently went on a mission trip to Kenya.

Mrs. Lillian Carte, pastor's secretary, First Church, Long Beach, has received an SBC award for advanced achievement as a church secretary.

Helen Fling will speak to Baptist Women at Garaywa

Helen (Mrs. Robert) Fling, promotion associate in new areas, Home Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, will be guest speaker for the Baptist Women Retreat May 14-15 at Camp Garaywa.

Mrs. Fling joined the staff of the Home Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union in September, 1977. She served six years as national WMU president, while her husband was pastor in Texas and she served five years as state president while he was in New York.

Upon his retirement as a home missionary, the Flings went to Munich, Germany on a year's special assignment of the Foreign Mission Board to minister in the English-speaking Baptist Church.

Mrs. Fling is known as a conference leader, speaker, and writer of missions books and programs. She became treasurer of the North American Baptist Women's Union in 1977.

Mrs. Jane Sumrall of New Albany will share experiences of serving as an associate missionary in Brazil and Mrs. Richard Perkins of Pascagoula will tell about new approaches to mission action. There will be others to share what is being done across Mississippi in Baptist Women work.

The retreat begins at 2:30 Friday and closes at 2:30 Saturday. Cost is \$13 and reservations must be made by May 5. Mail these to Ethel McKeithen, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205 and make checks payable to Mississippi WMU.

Baker will preach for CT Leadership Retreat

Bill Baker, pastor of First Church, Clinton, will be the preacher for the Church Training Leadership Retreat at Gulfshore, August 11-14.

The leadership retreat will include training conferences for all churches and associational Church Training leaders as well as worship, Bible study, preaching, and fellowship.

Reservations are now being accepted by the assembly. They may be made by sending a \$15 registration fee for each person to Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Henderson Point, Pass Christian, MS 39571.

Baker is a native of Pontotoc and a graduate of Mississippi State, Ole Miss, New Orleans Seminary and has earned his doctorate from Mississippi State.

Prayer seminar place changed

Evelyn Christenson, author of *What Happens When Women Pray, Lord, Change Me, and Gaining through Losing*, will be in Tupelo on April 24. She will lead a prayer seminar on *Lord, Change Me*.

The seminar will be at Harrisburg Baptist Church, 1800 West Main St., Tupelo, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. It was first scheduled for Calvary Baptist Church, Tupelo, but response has been so good, says Roland Neil Anest, chairman of the prayer seminar committee, that the meeting place has been changed to provide more space.

The Bengali New Testament for Muslim readers is selling so well in Bangladesh that it is making history for the Bible Society there, says a communique to the American Bible Society in New York. The Bangladesh Bible Society reports that 19,000 copies of the Injil Sharif (the Muslim Bengali New Testament) were sold out within three months of publication.

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Mississippi Baptist Activities

April 25-May 2 Senior Adult Week (CT Emphasis)
April 26 Bible Drill State Finals; FBC, Gulfport; 4:30 p.m. (CT)
April 26 Adult 8.5 X '85 Growth Seminar; FBC, Senatobia; 7-9 p.m. (SS)
April 27 Bible Drill State Finals; FBC, Laurel; 4:30 p.m. (CT)
April 27-30 Regional Child-Life Conference; Ridgecrest, N. C. (WMU)
April 29 Bible Drill State Finals; FBC, Newton; 4:30 p.m. (CT)
April 30 Bible Drill State Finals; FBC, Brookhaven; 4:30 p.m. (CT)
April 30-May 1 Associational WMU Officer Training; Camp Garaywa, Clinton; 4 p.m., 30th-4 p.m., 1st (WMU)
Bible Drill State Finals; 2 p.m. Calvary BC, Jackson/Colonial Heights BC, Jackson (CT)
May 1

Deadline extended for state BYW Conference

Because of the number of pre-registrants for the first state BYW Conference, May 7-8, at Gulfshore, the deadline for registration has been extended to Friday, April 30.

Mrs. Paul (Fran) Vandercook, Mississippi home missionary, Gulfport, will participate on the conference program. Fran will be sharing the work here at home and assisting members of BYW organizations in planning workable mission action projects during the Saturday afternoon Encounters.

Mrs. Vandercook, is a Mississippian, a graduate of Mississippi College in Clinton, and appointed by the Home Mission Board to serve in Christian Social Ministries and Language Missions with the Gulf Coast Association, the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and the Home Mission Board. The Vandercooks have two children, John and Heather.

Sheryl Churchill, BYW consultant, Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, Birmingham, will participate on the program in leading the three sessions of Bible study. Sheryl will use as her emphasis for three studies the theme for the weekend conference "WATCH." She will also lead an Encounter on basic BYW work.

Registration will be at 4 p.m. on Friday afternoon, May 7. The program will begin at 7:30 p.m. The conference concludes Saturday afternoon, May 8.

Homecomings

Silver Springs Church, Osyka has named April 25 as homecoming day, to include morning worship at 11, dinner on the grounds, and a song service at 1:30 p.m. Benny Olliff, former pastor, will be guest speaker. Olliff is a chaplain at Vernon Center, Vernon, Texas. Previously he was a chaplain at Southern Baptist Hospital, New Orleans, La. and later at Baptist Memorial Hospital, Kansas City, Mo. James M. Thornhill is pastor at Silver Springs.

Preschoolers' teacher sessions are planned



Couch

Davis

The third and fourth sessions of Sunday School Week at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly this summer will include special interest conferences for workers with older preschoolers and with older children.

These sessions will take place Aug. 2-4 and Aug. 5-7.

Leading the older preschool conference will be Bob Couch from the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville. He is supervisor for the new curriculum line for preschoolers that will be available Oct. 1 of this year.

Leading the older children's conference will be Ginny Davis, supervisor of the Children's Foundation Curriculum, also with the Sunday School Board.

Reservations for any session at Gulfshore may be secured by writing Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Henderson Point, Pass Christian, Miss., 39571.

Space is available only in the third session of Sunday School Week. The other three are full.



Churchill

Vandercook

at 3 p.m.

The registration fee, (2 beds, 2 people: \$24; 8 beds, 8 people: \$22) per person which includes three meals, room, linens, insurance and programming, needs to be sent to Marilyn Hopkins, BYW Conference, Box 530, Jackson, Ms. 39205. Make checks payable to Woman's Missionary Union. Registration will not be taken by Gulfshore Baptist Assembly and should be mailed before Friday, April 30.



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Capital Outlays & Debt Service	14.0%
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Promotion & Development	1.5%

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1. Figures based upon our fiscal year ending 6/30/81.
"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" (Lamentations 1:12a)

1. Figures based upon our fiscal year ending 6/30/81.
"When my father and mother forsake me, then the lord will take me up!" (Psalms 27:10)

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Editorials . . .

Tuition tax credits not an answer

President Reagan's proposal for tuition tax credits may not make it through Congress this year, but there are questions that need to be considered nevertheless. If the issue is not adopted this year, it may be back next year.

We need to be advised that tuition tax credits are not proposed as tax deductions whereby one simply does not pay taxes on the amount spent for tuition. They are the taxes themselves. The parents use the taxes to pay the tuition. It is raking the cream off of the top.

As the idea is being proposed, during fiscal year 1983 the parents of children in private schools would not pay in taxes an amount equal to half of the tuition paid up to a maximum of \$100 credit. That would mean multiplied millions of dollars not being received as taxes. In fiscal year 1984 the amount would increase by 300 percent, or to a maximum of \$300 per family. After that the credit would amount to \$500 per year. Again, that amount is taxes due and not paid. The revenue loss would be astronomical. It would have to be made up some way, so everybody

else would be helping the families with children in private schools to send their children to school. This includes denominational schools as well as private institutions.

With such incentive, many families not sending their children to private school would feel that they should do so. So public schools would be faced with loss of revenue and loss of students, which would cause further loss of revenue. The possibility would be that the public school could be destroyed.

On the one hand the President has already suggested a reduction in federal funds going to public schools. Now he is suggesting additionally, even in the face of a mounting budget deficit, that multiplied billions of dollars in taxes not be collected. A great deal of what the federal government has been doing in public schools was for the benefit of the poor. Thus under the proposed circumstances the poor would be expected to help finance the children in the private schools that the poor could not afford to attend.

The President's proposal surely was not specifically designed to help those

who want to send their children to private schools but cannot afford to without the tax credit. Families with incomes of up to \$50,000 would be eligible for full credit, and families with incomes of up to \$70,000 would be entitled to some amount of credit.

There will be those who will say that because they pay taxes for public school support, they should receive tax credit for their children in private school. One doesn't withhold taxes, however, because he had hired a private detective to protect his home. And we continue to pay taxes to support the fire department regardless of how much we may have spent to try to keep our homes from burning.

The fact is, we can't afford tuition tax credits. We can't afford to lose the tax revenue, and we can't afford to jeopardize the public school.

Does it seem inconsistent that on the one hand the government would take away the tax exemption for a private school in Mississippi because it had been practicing what the government had defined as racial discrimination and on the other hand exempt the pa-

rents of the students from paying taxes in the first place?

Does it constitute the establishment of a religion for the government to excuse the parents of students in religious schools from paying taxes and thus put a greater tax burden on everyone?

Those are hard questions, but they must be faced if we are to consider tuition tax credits.

There is no question but that many fine Mississippi Baptist families have children in private schools, where they are receiving quality education. There is no question also that many are discouraged with the prospects of the public schools. But let's not give up on the public schools. They are the only hope for a literate nation. They can only be helped if the citizens of the nation will help them.

Surely each family is free to choose the schools it wants for its children and is responsible for choosing the best it can provide. Tuition tax credits will not help the public schools, however; and we all are responsible for the public schools, whether or not we have children in them.

IT'S GREAT TO READ A PAPER THAT TELLS THE "GOOD NEWS"



BAPTIST RECORD
SUNDAY - JUNE 6

—Bob Shirley

Have we given up on TV?

A number of significant circumstances have been noted recently; and, while none will take such length of discussion as to demand a separate note, each is of such importance as to demand attention.

Tornadoes

First, the devastating tornadoes of a few weeks ago certainly demand attention. Mississippi had its share with the one at Philadelphia that resulted in three deaths. Of note also was the one at Paris, Texas, which took several more lives and did widespread damage. This one is all the more significant to Mississippians because it was James Semple, pastor of First Baptist Church, Paris, who was among the first to arrive with food supplies (a truck load of Campbell's soup) following Hurricane Camille.

Lang Lectures

Another item of interest to the writer, and hopefully to all Mississippi Baptists, was the Lang Lectures held recently at Mississippi Baptist Seminary. One of the speakers was John Westbrook, a Houston, Texas, pastor. Of particular interest to the writer, however, is the fact that Westbrook, a Baylor graduate, as is the writer, was a football player while he was in college. Unless memory has failed completely, which is always a possibility, during his college football days

Westbrook, already a preacher, was the first black player to make the starting lineup in a Southwest Conference school. Seminary President Richard Brogan points out that Westbrook is a fourth generation preacher. He is pastor of a thriving church in downtown Houston. That a church would thrive in that commercial area is a major accomplishment.

Parchman Revival

Another former Baylor football player-preacher was also in Mississippi recently when evangelist Bill Glass brought an evangelistic crusade to Parchman penitentiary. Glass was All-America at Baylor and all-pro with the Cleveland Browns. He has been in evangelism since before his retirement from football in 1968 and has been devoting most of his efforts to a prison ministry for the past 10 years.

Glass has an amazing organization at work. He had 150 volunteers from all over the nation with him for counseling during the Parchman crusade. He has a list of those who can serve, and he lets them know when and where the crusades are to be held. Those who can make the time available show up at their own expense.

Also joining the ministry at Parchman was a group of Christian athletes who visit prisons all over the nation. These included Joe Green, formerly with the Pittsburgh Steelers;

Paul Wren, champion weight lifter; Lawrence Pillers, San Francisco 49ers; McCoy Elmore, former pro basketball player; and Dave Washington, formerly with San Francisco 49ers and now with the division of planning and policy in the office of Gov. William Winter.

The reports are that there were 600 decisions during the prison crusade. A crusade at the same time at Moorhead resulted in 100 more decisions.

Decency on Television

Finally, it should be of interest that a Mississippian is waging a determined war against the encroaching depravity of television. It has been apparent for some time that those who are handling that fine medium of communication and entertainment are continually testing the waters to see what the viewing public will put up with, and they have been stretching their program material farther and farther away from the hallmark of decency.

Don Wildmire, a United Methodist minister from Tupelo, is battling the networks and their program suppliers every inch of the way. And he is achieving some success. Network people are subjecting him to ridicule, which means he is touching sore spots. His National Federation for

Decency is the kingpin of a national coalition of such groups that is steadily growing.

Some people scream censorship; but when it is piped into our homes, we have the right to scream ourselves.

Television executives continue to say that the medium merely reflects life as it is. That is true only in that it depicts an exaggerated view of a small portion of life. Besides that, wouldn't it be much better if television could improve life rather than simply reflect it?

There are many who advocate the use of the on/off switch when television gets too embarrassing for mixed company. That leaves, they say, those programs available for those people who want to watch them. It also leaves them available for youngsters with television sets behind the closed doors of their bedrooms. The warning of needing to be watched in the company of an adult doesn't mean a thing.

Don Wildmire is to be commended for his determination and consistent stand, and he is due all the help he can get. He is fighting a battle for all of us. Most of the rest of us seem to have thrown up our hands and walked away.

The network executives knew we would. We always do.

Book Reviews

THINE IS THE GLORY by Augustine Burch (Carlton Press, Inc., \$4.50, 62 pp.) (This book of poetry is written by a member of First Baptist Church, Brookhaven. Art illustrations are by Tom Ross, art instructor, Co-Lin Junior College. Some of the topics included are God's greatness, the love of Jesus, home, friendship, children, and special days. Available at Baptist Book Store.)

Books can add a new touch to a home, and make it a place which children will remember with gratitude. Soon after graduation from the university, I began a ministry that put me in a different home every week. I soon learned to recognize the tone of that home by the books on the center table, the music on the piano, and the pictures on the wall. Augustine Burch's beautiful new book of poetry, *Thine Is The Glory*, is the type that would make for that special somebody a lasting gift that is for "keeps."

Augustine Burch has a natural sense of rhythm, aided by a deep devotion to Jesus and intensified by that inspiration which only he can give. It is a delight to recommend her poems. The first section of her book is titled "Come Walk With Me in the Springtime." To celebrate springtime's memorable days with a book of unforgettable loveliness is to remind ourselves that "a thing of beauty is a joy forever."

Other sections are on "Memories of Home" and "The Joy of Children." Words have a way of returning just at the right time and place with a value we cannot calculate. Not too long ago a burglar was trying to get into my house. Out of the past there came slipping back a child's message: "What time I am afraid, I will put my trust in Thee." Stored-up beauty as that in Augustine's book, can come back at just the right hour or second to caution, to brighten, to bless.—Rosalee Mills Appleby

Revival Dates

Indian Springs (Perry): April 25-30; Roy J. Wood, pastor, Bellehaven, Ocean Springs, evangelist; W. C. Rainey, music director, Crestview, leading the singing; James Shoemaker, pastor; services at 7:30 p.m.

Bayou View (Gulf Coast): April 23-25; David Raddin, minister of education and youth, First, Wiggins, evangelist; Marilyn Smith, minister of music, New Hope, leading music.

First, Gulfport: April 25-28; Landrum Leavell, president of New Orleans Seminary, evangelist; Bob Jones, minister of music at Main Street Church, Hattiesburg, guest musician.

North 31st Avenue Baptist Church, Hattiesburg: April 23-25; Richard White, pastor of First Baptist Church, Rummelstown, evangelist; music to be directed by Dessaree Nicholas; Glenda Dozier, soloist; Sue Sumrall, pianist; services at 7 nightly; lunch in fellowship hall after morning service Sunday; David Howard, pastor.

First Baptist, Pearl: April 25-29; Ed Griffin, pastor at Ridgeland, evangelist; Jimmy Cutrell, minister of music at First, Gulfport, music evangelist; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; during week at 7 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., noon service from 12 to 1, with light lunch served before service; Stanley B. Barnett, pastor.

Peoples Church, Ripley: April 18-23; at 7:30 p.m.; Gary Crowell; Gravel Hill Church, Ramer, Tenn., evangelist; music under direction of Malcolm Lindsey, music director at Peoples; Youth Night to be Friday, April 23; Gregg Thomas, pastor.

Star Baptist Church (Rankin): April 25-28; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. at noon and 7:30 p.m.; Tim Rayborn, pastor of Monticello Baptist Church, evangelist; J. M. Wood, minister of music at Broadmoor, Jackson, music evangelist; Jimmy Harrington, pastor; Eric McNair, minister of music.

Lakeland Church (Itawamba): April 25-30; Danny Sparks, Pontotoc County, speaker; Wayne Higgins, pastor; Barry Swartz, leading the singing.

Providence (Attala): April 29-May 2; Thurs. and Fri. at 7:30 p.m.; Sat. at 7 p.m.; Sunday at 11 a.m.; Bill and Gail Roberts, Parkway Church, Kosciusko, leading the music; Walter Hines, pastor of Providence Church, evangelist.

First Baptist Church of Ozona (Pearl River County): April 25-30; services at 7:30 p.m.; Kenneth Rhodes, pastor, Juniper Grove Church, evangelist; John Downing, pastor.

Southwestern professor to become HMB volunteer

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Cal Guy, professor of missions at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for 36 years, will retire July 31 and become the director of the Center for Missions and Education at the Luther Rice homesite in Northboro, Mass.

Guy and his wife, Terry, will become Mission Service Corps volunteers Sept. 1, according to Wendell Belew, director of the Home Mission Board's missions ministries division.

Guy will work through the Seminary External Education Division, a joint extension service of six Southern Baptist seminaries. He will teach, preach and assist with New England association conferences. Guy also will work with bivocational pastors beginning new churches in southern New Hampshire.

The birthplace of Luther Rice, organizer of the first national Baptist convention, was acquired by the Home Mission Board in 1968. It is now being

renovated by Baptist volunteers as a visitors' center, historical library and seminary extension center. The property is also site of the Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church and the Baptist General Association of New England. The homesite will be dedicated next year in honor of Rice's 200th birthday.

The Guy's interest in New England grew out of a sabbatical visit to Union Theological Seminary in New York where, Guy says, "I developed a major burden for the area and would have stayed if I hadn't already been called to teach."

The couple will live in an upstairs apartment at the homesite. Downstairs rooms are being furnished with period antiques by Mrs. Cecil Day of Atlanta, Ga.

The Guy's will replace Rufus and Mrs. Crozier, who will be curators of the homesite until June. Crozier is former professor at Missouri Baptist College.

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Antioch Baptist Church, Alcorn Association, has called Bruce Ingram as children's church pastor. Ingram is a freshman ministerial student at Blue Mountain College.

First Baptist Church, Poplarville, has called Ron McCully as minister of education and youth, and J. D. Batson as minister of music. McCully is a recent graduate of Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth. He also served River Oaks Baptist Church as minister of education. He and his wife Sharon, both from Tupelo, have a son, Matthew. J. D. Batson served as interim minister of music before he accepted the call full time. He and his wife Ethyl and daughters Cindy, Angie, Lisa, and Laurie, live near Wiggins but will move to Poplarville. The Batsons have served as missionaries to Brazil.

Cary Baptist Church, Sharkey County, has called A. R. Garrison as pastor. He attended Northwest College and studied at Luther Rice Seminary and International Bible Institute and Seminary, and holds a Th.D. degree. Garrison goes to Cary from Greenwood, where he was pastor for 17 years. A native of Panola County, he has been a pastor for 21 years.

Leaf River Church, Smith County, has called H. C. Bailey as pastor.

New Henleyfield Baptist Church, Carriere, has called David Rowlson as pastor. He is a graduate of Baptist Bible Institute, Graceville, Fla., and is now a student of New Orleans Seminary, where he is seeking a master of divinity degree.

He has served churches in Georgia and Louisiana. He and his wife Susan have two children, Stephanie, 9, and Sheila, 2.

Sardis Church, Copiah County, has called Jimmy McNair as pastor.

Raybon Richardson has accepted the pastorate of Biggersville Baptist Church (Alcorn). Richardson goes from New Liberty Church in Tishomingo County, where he was pastor four years. He is enrolled in New Orleans Seminary extension in Tupelo. He and his wife, Maudie, have two daughters, Lenora and Angie.

Kenneth R. Shoemaker of Hattiesburg has been named pastor of Bond Baptist Church (Gulf Coast). He holds the bachelor of science degree from William Carey College and the master of divinity and master of religious education degrees from New Orleans Seminary. He has served as youth director in Virginia and as pastor of First Baptist Church, Brooklyn, Miss. Recently he has been involved in the preschool worship program at Temple Baptist Church, Hattiesburg. A chaplain with the U.S. Army Reserve, he is married to the former Cheryl Saucier. They have two children.

The Baptist Record

(ISSN-0005-5778)

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Box 530

Jackson, Miss. 39205

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The Mississippi Baptist Convention

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Baptist Record Advisory Committee: Perrell Cook, Aberdeen; Marcus Finch, Meridian; vice-chairman; Odie Henderson, Cleveland; Gary Holand, Pascagoula; chairman; Tom Holman, Jackson; James Jackson, Columbia.
Subscriptions: \$5.25 a year payable in advance. Published weekly except week of July 4 and Christmas.
Second Class Postage paid at Jackson, Mississippi.
The Baptist Record is a member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

Mississippi gifts to Foreign Missions Week of Prayer (Lottie Moon Christmas Offering) are listed as received from June 1, 1981 through March 31, 1982 with 1,615 churches participating. At that time total gifts amounted to \$3,052,307.90

Independence, Mo. (EP)—While Wallace B. Smith, president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, waited in a private room on March 30, delegates to the church's world conference overwhelmingly accepted a document he released to the church as being the word of God. Most of the document concerns changes in assignments for several of the top church officers.

Bible Book Series



David anointed king over Israel

By Howard E. Spell, Clinton
2 Samuel 5:1-7, 9-12

Following the death of Abner and of Ishbosheth there does not seem to have been any leader in the northern tribes powerful enough to establish a government and declare himself king. If there were those who aspired to such a role, we are not told about them.

I. The elders of the people turn to David (5:1-3)

It will be recalled that before his death, Abner had conferred with the elders of Israel about their turning to David as their leader. Thus the way had been paved for a delegation from the north to journey to Hebron and confer with David. The expression "all the tribes of Israel came to David" need not mean that the total population made the trip. Representatives of all the tribes is probably to be understood. Was there some flattery in their assertion that even when Saul was king, David was the real leader?

It seems only natural for us to wonder about what was involved in the statement: "And King David made a covenant with them before the Lord at Hebron" (5:3b NASV). There is little doubt that David actually sought God's leadership. Naturally there would have been questions raised, favors requested, and even demands made on both sides.

Some understanding would have been sought concerning the power the king would exert, the number of men required for military duty with the percentages to be sought from each tribe, and the amount of taxes to be paid. Did some of the elders want political appointments for themselves or their families? Of course questions like this must go unanswered, but we should remember something about human nature and personal ambitions.

II. A bird's-eye view of David's reign (3:4-5)

Since we shall have nine more lessons dealing with the years of Israel's history during David's reign, verses 4-5 merely summarize a few pertinent facts. In thinking about David's age when he became king, one needs to keep in mind that people in different eras and unlike cultures have varying ideas about what constitutes maturity. Although he was only 30 years of age, David had lived through some very trying times and had gained varied experiences to help him in his new role.

III. Jerusalem made the capital city (5:6-7)

We are not told who raised the question about where the king over all Israel should live. Surely all would have agreed that Hebron was too far to the south. In all probability representatives from several of the larger cities had pointed out the advantages of selecting their city as the ideal location for the seat of government.

From the book of Joshua we learn that the tribe of Judah had not been able to drive the Jebusites from their stronghold and really possess this territory which had been assigned to them even though they had killed the king and burned the city.

Having grown up in Bethlehem, David knew the advantages of the location since only six miles separated the two places. It is from Jebus and Shalom (Salem), the Hebrew word meaning "peace," that we get Jebus Shalom or Jerusalem. So easily fortified was Jebus that they had claimed even the blind and the lame could defend it against attackers. David had other ideas about this and did capture the city. We are given no details of the attack, nor are we told specifically that David sought the Lord's leadership in this venture; but it is assumed that he did so.

IV. David begins a building program (5:9-12)

Verses 9-12 are again rather summary statements and are not intended as explicit accounts of how David became greater and greater. From what is said in verses 11-12 one might assume Hiram, the king of Tyre, took the initiative in constructing buildings in Jerusalem. Of course Hiram could have seen this would be a good market for their products, but it is likely David took the initiative.

Palestine produced very little of what would have been called suitable building material. To be sure, there were olive and fig trees in abundance, but these were needed for providing food and would not have been cut even if the wood had been desirable for construction purposes. There were, along the River Jordan, some trees of a rapidly growing, soft variety, but they would not have furnished the timbers necessary for large public buildings. Thus David entered into contract negotiations with Hiram to provide cedars of Lebanon and other building materials.

Although the Israelites had constructed many of their own dwellings, they apparently lacked the skills needed for larger edifices. It is not

known when, for example, they learned the art of iron working. From 1 Samuel 13:19 we learn there were no blacksmiths in Israel at that time, and the Philistines had refused to teach them the art. Hiram was to provide the necessary materials and workmen, but we do not know the details of the contract which David negotiated.

In all of these events God was using various factors in helping to build individuals and a nation. David "realized that the Lord had established him as king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel" (2 Sam. 5:12 NASV).

Today God is still interested in the development of his people—even more interested than we ourselves are. In our prayer life we sometimes seem to be begging God for our wants forgetting that he is anxious for his people to have the best. We simply need to meet his conditions for receiving what a loving God can provide.

Morgan City church founder dies at 101

Mrs. Willie Love Brent, age 101, died Feb. 23, 1982, in Greenwood Leflore Hospital after a brief illness. She was the last living founder of the Morgan City Baptist Church, Morgan City, Miss.

When she was a baby, about 100 years ago, her family moved to the Morgan City area, when it was "in the woods and Morgan City not even thought of yet." After the move, her grandmother set a goal to start a Sunday School.

Like her grandmother, Mrs. Brent was a strong Christian. She taught Sunday School in her front yard before the Morgan City Baptist Church was started. (The church was organized in 1906.) Later she played the piano at church and was active in WMU.

On her 100th birthday, the church gave a party, honoring her and expressing appreciation for her dedication to the Lord through the years.

The Home Mission Offering Year is January 1 - December 31.



Just for the Record

Rienzi Baptist Church, Alcorn Association, billed April "Glory Month." During the month, church members are engaging in a "Spring into Summer" attendance campaign and a "Show Us Thy Glory" stewardship emphasis. Using a point system, Sunday School classes are competing for a high attendance banner each Sunday and for a new Scofield Reference Bible to be awarded the teacher of the highest scoring class for the month. Wiley Gann is pastor.

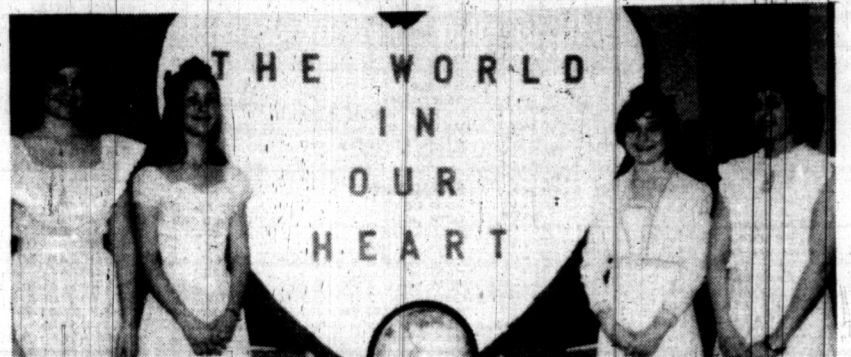
The young people's Sunday School class of Bradford Chapel Church, Calhoun County, held a Walk-a-Thon April 3, with \$800 proceeds going to Blondie Baker to be used to help correct a hearing problem. Thomas James is the young people's Sunday School teacher.

Russell Baptist Church, Rt. 10, Meridian, had a goal of \$700 for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, and raised \$828. Charles Griffith is pastor and Mrs. Hazel Hicks is WMU director.

The Sons of Faith Quartet, a professional gospel music group, will sing at Palestine Baptist Church, Harrisville, Sat. night, April 24, at 7:30 p.m. "There will be no admission charge, but a love offering will be taken," said Sammy McDonald, Harrisville music director.



CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH, WINSTON COUNTY, has awarded pins for perfect attendance in Sunday School. Ken Cooper, pastor, left, looks on as Billy Watson, Sunday School director, pins the 23rd-year pin on Albert Metts. Others receiving pins were Mrs. Mavis Hudson, 11 years, and Mrs. Albert Metts, one year.



DEBBIE REDDING, Jeanne Norman, Angela Hendrix, and Leigh Hurdle, members of First Baptist Church, Holly Springs, have attained the level of Queen in Acteens. They were crowned in a Studia recognition service. Leaders in Acteens are Mrs. Donnie Stewart and Mrs. Mike McNulty. Pastor is Donnie L. Stewart.

Chickasaw to hold tent crusade

The Chickasaw County Baptist Association will have a two week tent evangelistic crusade. The first week will be April 25-30, 7 p.m. at Van Vleet. The second week will be May 2-7, 7 p.m. at the Sleepy Hollow Campground.

The evangelistic team for the first week is Mel Craft, pastor, First Church, Richland, and Hubert Greer, music evangelist, from Brookhaven. The team for the second week is Guy Henderson, Mississippi Baptist evangelism director, and Dan Hall, Mississippi Baptist church music director.

The crusade is being sponsored in cooperation with the Evangelism Department, Miss. Baptist Convention Board, and the churches in the association. Hollis Bryant, Cooperative Missions Department, MBCB, is the foster missionary.

"I have to do something" will always solve more problems than "Something must be done."

Devotional
Harbored in Haran

By Bill R. Baker, pastor, First, Clinton
Genesis 11 and 12

A place in the Bible may be just that, a place. However, it may be more. A place may represent an idea or symbolize an experience. Consequently, geographical study in Scripture is more than just locating places. Gogatha is more than a place, for example.



Consider Haran as it relates to the life of Abraham. God had spoken. He wanted Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, but he wanted more than just to get him out of something; he desired to get him into something, namely Canaan. God's direction is not only AWAY FROM, but also TO. Failure to understand this may result in disappointment and lack of ultimate fulfillment.

There were strong ties compelling Abraham to remain harbored in Haran. This was the place of his family. His brother settled here and, in fact, the place is called the city of Nabor (Gen. 24:10). In those days there was a strong family tie and surely Abraham would have enjoyed living near his brother.

Haran was a good place to rear children. Maybe not the best place in the world, but certainly not the worst. Rearing children is of paramount importance to concerned parents. Abraham saw to it that his son Isaac married a girl from Haran even though he had moved miles away. This must have been a good place for securing wives in particular since Jacob went there for Rachel.

Haran was also a good place for business. Ezekiel speaks of the economic life there. The trade route connecting Damascus, Nineveh and Carchemish came by Haran.

Abraham's father died in Haran (Gen. 11:32) and death can often dull the sharp edge of incentive and progress.

Abraham faced a certain unknown in leaving Haran and he was 75 years of age. So why leave? Because God had spoken and divine purposes were operating. Regardless of the assets, no child of God must be content to harbor in Haran when there is a call to Canaan.

Life and Work Lesson

A call to obedience

By James L. Travis
Pastoral Services
University Medical Center, Jackson

Deuteronomy 1:1-4:9

For the following several Sundays we shall be looking at one of the books of the Pentateuch in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy). To sort out and apply these ancient teachings to the contemporary situation involves the dual task of attempting to understand the setting in life of the original writing, and also interpreting the truth from that original time in light of today's situation and needs.

I. The setting of events in Deuteronomy (1:1-4): This opening statement sets the stage for the book of Deuteronomy. In this first verse what is to follow in the next thirty-four chapters is purported to be Moses' farewell speech to and encounter with Israel. One may take that statement at face value and proceed from there to try to understand what this meant to the Jewish nation at this early formative period and make application to modern times.

It seems to me, however, more helpful to take into account the preponderance of biblical scholarship which, after careful study, has proposed that the book of Deuteronomy, while based on the oral tradition of Moses' interaction with Israel in these last days of his life, was actually written down hundreds of years later after Israel had been formed into a nation and had experienced considerable history of struggle to follow the teachings of Yahweh.

The book of Deuteronomy has been associated with the reform of King Josiah in 622/21 B.C. The aims of that reform that are spelled out in II Kings 22-23 find parallels in the core of Deuteronomy (5-26). However, most scholars suggest that the book originated in a time just prior to that, perhaps reaching back into the reign of King Hezekiah in 715-687/6 B.C. Therefore, Deuteronomy would contain the influence of the eighth century prophets, particularly Isaiah.

If this is the case, then this Israel which is addressed by Moses is very different from the one which stood at the foot of Mt. Horeb. This latter Israel knows Palestine with all its religious temptations. Politically, it has experienced a king and a graded civil service. The economic structures are no

longer that of the patriarchy which existed during the wilderness odyssey from Egypt to Canaan. Rather, the stage of the economy as evidenced in the book of Deuteronomy is based on currency. Statements such as found in 17:14-20 which spell out how a king should conduct himself lead one to believe that they had already experienced kingship and had witnessed the unfortunate consequences of a monarchy that did not follow the leadership of Yahweh.

Also, the statements in the 15th chapter regarding the cancellation of debts presupposes a currency-based economy that would have been far advanced beyond the primitive economic structure of the wilderness wanderers. There are many other indications in this book that it was put together at a much later time than the entrance into Canaan. However, the point should be noted clearly and strongly, that far from invalidating the book for our use today, it renders it all the more appropriate in our struggles to live up to our heritage.

If the Israel to which Deuteronomy was specifically addressed had few points of comparison with the Israel of those early days, if it was separated from the events of Horeb by a long and extremely incriminating history, could the later Israel still be Yahweh's people? The book of Deuteronomy brings back the answer clear and unambiguous. It is to this Israel, the people just as it was, that Yahweh's election and promise of salvation was proclaimed.

Deuteronomy was a way of saying that six centuries which had been a struggle with sin and constant apostasy were cancelled out. Israel, once more, could recall itself to Mt. Horeb to hear the divine word of salvation which had not lost its power. That word of salvation is captioned in a statement later on in the book of Deuteronomy (27:9): "This day thou art to become the people of Yahweh of God."

It seems to me that our nation today finds itself in similar circumstances. We have a tradition, not only going back to the foundation of the Judeo-Christian faith, but in the more than two centuries in this country in which there has been the struggle to live up to the principles on which the nation was founded. We often have not been successful, and yet again and again, from various corners of society, we are cal-

led back to that which promotes human dignity, freedom from oppression, the affirmation of the worth of each individual, and an awareness of the abiding values of life which extend far beyond the surface of materialism. Caught as we are today between the race to arm ourselves out of a sense of protection and the horrifying apocalyptic prospect of the destruction of the entire world, America needs to hear once again the proclamation of the truth imbedded in the book of Deuteronomy.

II. A heritage of greatness (4:5-8): We can examine this passage both from the standpoint of individuals and the standpoint of a nation. As Christians whose theological roots go all the way back into our Judeo-Christian heritage, we have received the moral guidelines and the law of love which offer to us the possibility of shaping our lives in redemptive and creative ways, even in the midst of national and international crises.

As a nation we need to recall the foundations of this political reality we refer to as the United States. Though it cannot be said of the United States that we are indeed a Christian nation (we are far too pluralistic in our religious makeup for that claim to be made), it is a historical fact that the Judeo-Christian principles form a major part of the way in which we have shaped this country. With that awareness, as Christians we can be duly affirmed in our sense of uniqueness, not in an arrogant claim to be better than any other religious grouping, but the kind of humble appreciation that ours is a choice privilege and responsibility to not only live out individually, but collectively, those great truths which really do make a nation great.

III. Obedience as a response to God's mercy (4:36-39): The writer of this passage reminds his readers that the God who called all things into being has, in fact, always taken the first step in initiating a relationship with humankind. The image here is of that divine and devoted call out of heaven itself to the creature wandering in confusion and sin.

From the references to the deliverance from bondage in Egypt and the struggle to make Canaan their own land, this passage is concluded by an affirmation which is important for us to keep before us in this modern world. The Lord is God throughout all reality, in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath, and in light of that, no other

Uniform Lesson

Assurance in times of stress

By Louie Farmer, Hattiesburg
Revelation 1:1-3, 9:11; 13:14

This is the first in a series of six lessons on Revelation, the most difficult and confusing book in our Bible. The first thing many of us need to do is learn to say the name correctly. So, now, say the following aloud three times: "It is Revelation and not Revelations."

Not only is Revelation a bewildering book, but a great array of equally bewildering commentaries and interpretations have been written about it. When we read two interpretations of Revelation we often wonder if they are written about the same book. Almost anything we write about Revelation can be documented in some commentary and subsequently refuted in another.

The passages chosen for today afford a general introduction to this book of visions, symbols, and vivid descriptions.

I. Introduction to Revelation (Revelation 1:1-3)

At the outset, Revelation claims to be a revelation of Jesus Christ. This could mean that it is a revelation by Christ, or a revelation about Christ, or that it is a revelation which belongs to Christ. The Greek can be translated either way and in this case probably all are true. Revelation is the word of God given to Christ and he is both the revealer and the revealed.

Revelation is written in apocalyptic style so that its intended receivers will understand and also that it will not be meaningful to those who would persecute the Christians. The Greek apokalupsis is translated revelation and means an unveiling.

The book is the word of God about things that shall soon happen. God gave it to Jesus Christ to give to his followers through an angel. The message was sent and was delivered by the angel to John in signs which were mostly visions.

Although this writing was not supposed to be meaningful to the enemies of Christianity, it was to be made pub-

foundation offers the inclusive prospect for living a life of obedience. God is all and in all, and this is characterized by his great mercy to us, ever wanting to deliver us from the various bondages in which we struggle, always calling first to us, and forever waiting on our answer.

lic. It was to be read aloud in the seven churches of Asia. John writes that the reader, and the hearers, especially those who keep the things written in his report, will be blessed. The real purpose of Revelation was to comfort and assure the readers who were under the terrible stress of the persecution of Rome.

In verse 1, John says the word of God concerned things that would shortly come to pass. At the end of the third verse he says, "For the time is near." There is an urgency in what he writes to the churches about things they are experiencing or soon will experience. We need not struggle with the idea that Revelation contains prophecy of things that have not come to pass in almost 2,000 years. God's timetable is not always ours.

II. Writer and recipients of Revelation (Revelation 1:9-11)

There is no doubt but that John wrote Revelation. There is some doubt that the Apostle John was the writer, as the title in the King James Version indicates. At any rate, the writer was acquainted with the churches in Asia. In verse 9 he claims a closeness to them by saying he is their Christian brother who is their companion in tribulation, in the kingdom of God, and in the patience or endurance which comes from Jesus Christ.

The word here translated tribulation means pressure. The picture is of the pressure applied to grapes to squeeze out the juice or that applied in a mill grinding grain.

Judaism was a legal religion in the Roman Empire of John's time and for a while Christianity was legal because it was considered a phase of the Jewish religion. As Christians became more numerous and outspoken, Rome considered them a threat to the empire. Worship of the emperor became mandatory and the Christians would not comply. It was because of this conflict that the tribulation had developed and John had been exiled to Patmos, a small rocky island used as a place of banishment for political or criminal offenders.

John was probably living in caves and mostly alone, but thinking of the churches and the Christian brothers in Asia. So, it was that on Sunday morning he was "in the Spirit," no doubt wishing that he could be worshipping with one of those churches. Some think John was in a trance. Likely he was in a deep spirit of prayer and meditation.

Suddenly he heard a voice behind him which he describes as sounding like a trumpet. This was his apocalyptic way of describing the volume and authority of the sound. He turned and saw the living Christ.

Jesus identified himself, saying that he was alpha and omega, the first and the last. He was about to give John a comforting message, so he told John to write what he saw and send the book to the seven churches in Asia. Remember that Asia as it is used here does not mean the continent of Asia as we think of it, but Asia Minor—what is now Turkey. So the Revelation was written to these seven churches.

III. Introduction to the style of Revelation (Revelation 13:1-4)

This section was selected to present the distinctive style of writing used in Revelation. It is called apocalyptic, which means revealing. This type of literature was used in times of tribulation and was familiar to the Jews. It used symbols, numbers, visions, animals, and dramatic conflict. It used vivid description, often very grotesque. All this made up a sort of code which was understood by the intended readers, but which was confusing to the enemies of Christianity.

In this passage John presents a vision which is very much like Daniel 7:2-7. He saw a beast coming up out of the sea. Ray Summers identifies this beast as the Roman emperor and writes, "In league with the devil to destroy the Christians is a foreboding beast, a jungle brute. He has ten horns—symbolizing great power. He has seven heads—symbolizing great wisdom; or from verse 3 it appears that this may symbolize great durability. Even when one of his heads received a death stroke, it continued to live. The beast has ten diadems—symbolizing great authority. Upon his heads are names of reviling and blasphemy. He is a vicious fighter partaking of the nature of a leopard, a bear, a lion, and exercising the power given him by the dragon."

The "name of blasphemy" in verse 1 is the name of various Roman emperors who made claims to be divine, and demanded that all men worship them.

This is the sort of imagery which makes up the message of Revelation. It is only meaningful when we understand what is being said. Then Revelation is a book filled with comfort and hope for the Christian.

